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Brooklyn College's Best of Brooklyn Dinner, held last night in, of all places, Manhattan (at the Rainbow Room), honored benefactor and alumnus Murray Koppelman.

"I have a lot of warm memories about Brooklyn and Brooklyn College because it did so much for me," Mr. Koppelman said.

The 1957 graduate, who majored in accounting, is president of Eastlake Securities, a Manhattan banking firm.

He is also president of Brooklyn College Hillel and a trustee and executive board member of the Brooklyn College Foundation. The Koppelman Professorships, endowed in 1994, are awarded to distinguished Brooklyn College faculty who "do the most besides teaching to help the community and the students," Mr. Koppelman said.

Mr. Koppelman was

raised in Boro Park. He proved industrious as a child, selling 6-cent ice creams and 10-cent frozen candy bars to bathers on Brighton Beach. He lived on a kibbutz for two years in the Negev Desert and served in the Army during the Korean War.

Actor Jimmy Smits, a 1980 graduate who is currently on "The West Wing," served as master of ceremonies. He now lives in Los Angeles, but his sisters still live near the campus.

As a student, Mr. Smits spent time at the coffee shop Gent's. These days, according to students attending the event, two of the favorite spots are Barnes & Noble and Tea Lounge, both in Park Slope.

The event raised money for the Brooklyn College Presidential Scholarship Program, which offers full academic scholarships to incoming freshmen.

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The actor, dancer, and painter with the booming voice, Geoffrey Holder, said it all: "Museums are playgrounds for adults."

Mr. Holder made the observation last night at the Museum of Arts & Design gala, to a crowd he described as "elegant and sassy."

The event celebrated art as well as the museum's pending move to 2 Columbus Circle from its current home on West 53rd Street. The redesign of the Edward Durrell Stone building has had its share of setbacks, but the museum's chairwoman, Barbara Tober, said she is confident her organization will prevail.

The event at Cipriani honored the chief executive of Related Urban Development, Kenneth Himmel, who developed the Time Warner Center - the museum's future neighbor; designers Lella and Massimo Vignelli; and glass artist Lino Tagliapietra.

The gala for the Friends of the Israel Museum Monday night had an all-in-the-family feel. To wit: Not only did Dana Kroil wear vintage Pucci - her mother's, from 30 years ago - she also convinced her mom to tell the dress's story: It was bought in the Bahamas with their husband/father's winnings from a night of gambling. Of course, the president of the group, the ebullient Ronnie Heyman, made everyone feel like part of her family.

The Archives of American Art, meanwhile, celebrated its 50th anniversary with a quiet dinner at the University Club last week - to be expected from a little-known organization with a hard-to-find gallery space in Midtown.

The event honored the arts patron Eli Broad and the art historian Robert Storr. Artists Cindy Sherman and Tom Otterness were among the guests.

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